

Appl. No. 10/034,218
Amdt. dated December 27, 2004
Reply to Office action of November 12, 2004

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0013] with the following amended paragraph:

[0013] In accordance with the preferred embodiment of the invention, the fan controllers 140a and 140b are connected together so as to provide a hardware-based fault response. That is, on a broad level, an error condition experienced by one fan controller or its fan(s) is transmitted to the other fan controller without the involvement of external controlling logic such as the host processor. This feature can be implemented in a variety of ways. For example, in Figure 1, each fan controller connects to a FAULT signal 144 which is used to communicate faults between controllers. The FAULT signal preferably is a bi-directional signal meaning that each fan controller 140a, 140b can assert the signal or receive it from another fan controller which asserted it. When a controller 140 detects a fault with one of its own fans, that controller asserts the FAULT signal. The other fan controller in the system detects the assertion of the FAULT signal and responds in a predetermined or programmed manner. For example, a controller receiving a FAULT signal asserted by another controller may respond by causing one or all of its fans to spin in a high speed mode. This permits the failure of a fan or fans connected to one fan controller to be detected by another fan controller which can respond by running its fan(s) at a faster speed to make up for the loss of airflow caused by the failed fans. This process advantageously does not require processor involvement. The FAULT signal also can be provided to the south bridge 130 or an interrupt routing device (not shown) so that the host processor 102 can also be alerted of the existence of a fault.